

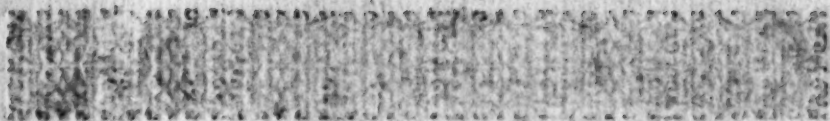
4486. 66. 69



Mr. Barnard's
Election-SERMON.

MAY 28th. 1746.





Mr. Board's



ARMON.

MAY 23 1746



*THE Presence of the Great GOD in the Assembly
of Political Rulers.*

A
S E R M O N

Preached before His EXCELLENCY
WILLIAM SHIRLEY, Esq;
GOVERNOUR;

The Honourable
His MAJESTY'S COUNCIL;
And the Honourable
House of REPRESENTATIVES

of the Province of the
Massachusetts-Bay in NEW-ENGLAND,

MAY 28th. 1746.

Being the DAY for the Election of His MAJESTY'S
COUNCIL for the said Province.

By *John Barnard, M.A.*

Pastor of a Church in *Andover.*

Prov. 15. 3. *The Eyes of the Lord are in every Place.*

Psal. 29. 1. *Give unto the Lord, O ye Mighty, Give
unto the Lord Glory and Strength.*

BOSTON in NEW-ENGLAND:

Printed by *John Draper*, Printer to His Excellency the
GOVERNOUR and COUNCIL, for *Daniel Gookin*, over
against the Old-South Meeting-House. 1746.

THE PUBLISHED BY THE BOARD OF THE
At a Council held at the Council-
Chamber in Boston, on Thursday
the Twenty-ninth of May 1746.

Ordered,



H A T JACOB WENDELL
and THOMAS BERRY, Esqrs.
give the Thanks of this
Board to the Reverend Mr. *John
Barnard*, for his Sermon preach'd
Yesterday before the Great and
General-Court or Assembly; and
that they desire a Copy thereof for
the Press.

Copy Examined,

per J. WILLARD, Secr.

Election-SERMON.

PSALM LXXXII. I. First Clause.

*G O D standeth in the Congregation of the
Mighty.*

It was a very foolish Assertion, and grossly reproachful to the infinite GOD, which was uttered by the Ancients of Israel, That *the Lord hath forsaken the Earth.*

Such a Conclusion, as it is highly blasphemous, so it subverts the Foundation of religious Duties resulting from the Circumstances of particular Persons, and Condition of Societies. It destroys Affiance in the Almighty, utterly

(a) Ezek. 8. 12.

discourages

discourages *Prayer* to Him for *temporal* Mercies, leaves no Place for the Exercise of *Repentance* and *Submission* to His Will, in a Day of *Adversity*; nor for devout and holy Joy and Gratitude, in a Time of *Prosperity*. It robs every sober and considering Mind of the Comfort and Satisfaction arising from an Apprehension of GOD's universal *Presidency* over His Creatures. How much soever the abandon'd Sons of Vice might be gratified with a Persuasion, that the *Deity* is confin'd to the *Third Heaven*, and not concern'd about Persons and Things in this lower *World*: It is certain, this Thought would overspread the Souls of the wise and serious Part of *Mankind* with Clouds and Darkness.

But Thanks be to GOD; notwithstanding the many and great *Apostacies* of this *Land*, our Degeneracy hath not proceeded to this Degree and Pitch of *Atteism*: We yet believe there is a glorious *Providence* managed by the sovereign, unerring, powerful, righteous, faithfull and merciful Hand of the *Most High*.

What but the Consideration of *this* induceth us religiously to *assemble* in this *sacred* Place, upon the joyful Return of our Anniversary Solemnities? Is not a Sense of our Dependance upon GOD, the great Motive of our coming into His *House*, this Morning? Is not the Belief, that He interests Himself in the Concerns of Men on Earth; that it is with Him graciously to continue us in the Enjoyment of the invaluable *Privileges*, which He hath given us; to direct and influence in the momentous Transactions of *this Day*, and the Affairs of Government the *Year* ensuing: Is not this *Belief* the Reason of the united *Supplications* we present unto Him, and the Oblation of *Praise* we pay Him, for *publick Blessings*?

The

The inspired Book of *Psalms*, out of which I have chosen the Passage, now read in your Audience, abounds in a peculiar Manner, in the Displays of the matchless Glory and Grandeur of the blessed GOD, as the supream Ruler and Governour of the World; it is fruitful in the Exhibitions of His boundless and everlasting Dominion and Kingdom; gives us Assurance, that His Angels, those Ministers whom He hath made Flames of Fire, do His Commandment, and hearken to the Voice of His Word^b. That He doth what He pleaseth in the Realms of Light above, and Governs in the inferior Heavens^c. That His Footstool is not below His Cognizance and Concern; but that He extends His Inspection and providential Influences to all Parts of this lower Creation^d. — And, that the Legions of Darknefs are under His Government^e.

But not to be too general, I shall contract and confine my Thoughts to one particular Branch of Divine Providence, plainly directed to in the Words of the Psalmist, *GOD standeth in the Congregation of the Mighty*.

The heavenly Intelligencies have the Stile *Mighty* given them in the sacred Oracles. The great Apostle declares, That the Lord Jesus Christ will be revealed from Heaven with His Mighty Angels^f: And St. John in his Visions, saw a mighty Angel make his Descent from the upper World^g: But the *Mighty*, whom the sacred Penman speaks of, are, in the Context, charged with judging unjustly, and accepting Persons, are exhorted to defend the Poor and Fatherless, and do Justice to the Afflicted and Needy; and tho' they are called Gods, yet were obliged to die like Men: Characters utterly incompatible to those spotless and immortal Creatures who surround the Throne of GOD.

^b *Psal.* 103. 20. ^c *Psal.* 118. 8. ^d *Psal.* 135. 6. ^e *Psal.* 78. 49. ^f 2 *Thess.* 1: 7. ^g *Rev.* 10. 1.

It is evident then, That by the *Mighty*, in the Congregation of whom GOD is said to stand, we are to understand *Men* that are concerned in the Government of a People, those that sustain high Posts, who have the *Legislative* Power in their Hands, who assemble and sit to consider, determine and resolve upon what will be for the Relief and Good of particular Persons, and Bodies and Societies of Men under their Jurisdiction; and the Defence, Peace and Happiness of the People in general, committed to their Charge: These are the Persons, I conceive, whom the Psalmist means, when he says, *GOD standeth in the Congregation of the Mighty.*

In this great Congregation GOD standeth: I suppose every one will easily conceive, that bodily Parts and Postures are by no means strictly and properly to be ascribed unto Him, who is an immense *Spirit*; but without any Difficulty will see a *Figure* in the Word. Should we take it strictly and literally it would be to debase the *Godhead*, and make Him such an one as ourselves^a: When it is said then, *GOD standeth in the Congregation of the Mighty*, we are to understand (as I apprehend) His inspecting and affording this honourable and important Assembly His protecting Presence and gracious Influence.

I shall endeavour to discourse upon the Words under the two following PROPOSITIONS.

- I. *IT is most fit and suitable, that there should be a Number concern'd in the Civil Government of a People.*
- II. *THE great GOD is present in the Assembly of Political Rulers.*

It is most fit and suitable, that there should be a Number concern'd in the Civil Government of a People.

The Congregation of the Mighty, says the Text, implying there was a Number invested with Power and Authority convened for the Exercise thereof. Now that it is most fit and suitable it should be, will appear from the three following Things.

1st, Such is the *Infirmity* and *Darkness* of the human Understanding in Man's present Condition, as to render Government managed by a Number of Men most eligible.

In this State of Imperfection, the intellectual Powers of Mankind labour under great Disadvantages; tho' they may be greatly improv'd, strengthened and brightned by Use, Study, Education and Conversation: The wisest Man is not always wise; his Mind is subject to *Inadvertency*, and his Memory needs a *Monitor*: Tho' his Capacity be large and extensive, yet there may be some Things relating to the publick Good, that have escaped his Observation, that others may take Notice of; and for this Reason 'tis best there should be an Assembly of Rulers: The Welfare of a People may be more promoted by having many Heads employ'd for it, than One only.

When there is a Number concern'd in Government, setting to deliberate and resolve upon Measures proper to be taken for the Safety, Peace and Advantage of a People, or the Relief and Happiness of particular Men; the Debates, in such an Assembly, are productive of *Light*, which tends to prepare and ripen the Thoughts of Rulers for coming to a Determination upon the weighty Matters that call for their Consideration.

2^{dly}, The Burden of Government, if faithfully attended, is too great for a single Person to bear.

It is a Business that is very ponderous ; the Cares and Fatigues of it are too painful and heavy to be sustained by *one* Man ; his Strength had need be the Strength of Stones, and his Flesh of Brass, or he will sink under them. Apprehensive of this was *Jethro*, Father-in-law to *Moses* ; when he saw him sit alone, from Morning to Evening, to judge the People ; he was concern'd for him, and said, *the Thing that thou doest is not good, thou wilt surely wear away ; this Thing is too heavy for thee, thou art not able to perform it thyself alone ;* and then he gives him this prudent Advice, to provide out of all the People able Men, such as feared GOD : Men of Truth, hating Covetousness, and to place them over the People.

There is a Multiplicity of arduous Concerns that lie upon the Hands, and fill the Head of a *Civil Ruler* ; and it is so especially at some particular *Junctures*. The Safety and Defence of his People is to be intensely regarded, when Enemies make *War* against them : Their Trade is to be protected ; it may be, they are fallen into perplex and distressing Circumstances, and, if it can be, are to be extricated and delivered out of them : Good Laws must be supported, and new ones occasionally made ; meet Persons to execute them are to be chosen, and put into Commission : Religion and Learning are to be upheld, and Measures taken to promote the flourishing of these great Interests : The Grievances of particular Persons and Societies must, if it be practicable, be redress'd. It is not enough, that a Ruler take Care, that the People don't suffer in their Persons and Interests ; but he must lay himself out to advance their *Prosperity* : And it may be further observed, that sometimes a People are grievously out of *Frame* ; and this renders the Difficulties of Government so much the greater. The composed, meek and patient Leader of *Israel*, found the Discontent and Uneasiness of his People to be more than he could bear,

How can I myself alone, said he, bear your Cumbrance, and your Burden, and your Strife? ^k And he thus expostulated with the glorious GOD, ^l Have I conceived all this People, have I begotten them? that Thou shouldst say unto me, Carry them in thy Bosom, (as a nursing Father carrieth the sucking Child) unto the Land which Thou swarest unto their Fathers: I am not able to bear all this People alone, because it is too heavy for me. The compassionate GOD heard the Complaint of his dejected Servant, and provided Assistance for him, said unto him, Gather unto Me seventy of the Elders of Israel, whom thou knowest to be the Elders of the People, and Officers over them, and bring them unto the Tabernacle of the Congregation, that they may stand there with thee, and I will come down, and talk with thee there; and I will take of the Spirit, that is upon thee, and I will put it upon them, and they shall bear the Burden of the People with thee, that thou bear it not thyself alone. It is very evident then, that the Government of a People is too great a Labour and Burden for One to bear; and consequently it is most fit and suitable, that a Number should be employed and concerned therein, that there should be an Assembly of Rulers to share the Labours, Cares and Troubles which attend it.

3^{dly}, For one Person alone to have the Government of a People in his Hands, would be too great a Temptation.

It tends to excite and draw forth the Pride of Man, to make him unsufferably haughty; it gives him too much Liberty to exert his Corruptions; and it encourages him to become a Tyrant and an Oppressor, to dispense with Laws, and break the most solemn Oaths; to proceed so far in his unrighteous Practices, that his Subjects, weary of the Doctrine of passive Obedience and Non-resistance, are necessitated to plead their own Cause, and vin-

^k Deut. 1. 12. ^l Numb 11

dicate their Rights by Measures which for a long Time they were loth to make Use of.— Thus King *James the Second*, tir'd with *Parliaments*, and thirsting after a despotick Power, set them aside; and such *arbitrary* Courses did he take, that his injured, provoked Subjects, arm'd themselves in Defence of their *Religion* and *Liberties*; the Consequence of which was his *abdicating* the Throne, which, by all his Attempts and the Endeavours of his Friends, he could never afterwards recover. So let the Efforts of his *pretended Son* to seat himself upon the *British Throne*, be blasted by Heaven, and rendered abortive, as (blessed be GOD) they have hitherto been.

I From the Whole then, it appears, that it is most fit and suitable that a *Number* should be concern'd in *Civil Government*, that it is best for a People to be under such a Constitution and Establishment, whether it be a mixt *Monarchy*, that excellent Form which *our Nations*, and the *British Plantations* are happily in the Enjoyment of, who are governed by a KING, House of *Peers*, and *Commons*, the latter of which are chosen by the People; or an *Aristocracy*, which is the Government of a *Commonwealth*, by *Nobles*; or a *Democracy*, wherein *Magistrates* are elected from among and by the People.

I pass now to take the *Second Proposition* under Consideration.

II. *The great GOD is present in the Assembly of Political Rulers.*

To illustrate this *Head*, I shall consider in what *Respects* He is present in this *Assembly*.

It would be too great a Departure from the Intention of the Text, should I observe, that He is present in it *Representatively*, although 'tis so in *Fact*, for Rulers are his Vicegerents, his Agents, and exhibit some Image of His

His Authority and governing Power : For this Reason they are called Gods in Scripture, they are stiled so twice in the *Psalm* that contains my Text : *He judgeth among the Gods : I said ye are Gods :* But not to dwell upon this Thought.

The inspecting Presence of the great GOD is always in this Assembly.

He is an immense Being, and therefore Omniscient : *Is He a GOD at hand, and not afar off ; and can any hide themselves in secret Places, that He should not see them ? He fills Heaven and Earth with His Presence ; and nothing escapes His Observation* ^m.

Hath not He, who governs and will judge the World, a universal Knowledge of Men, their Actions and Behaviour ? Before His Eyes are in every Place, beholding the Evil and the Good ⁿ ; He pondereth Men's Goings ^o ; and all Things are open and naked unto Him ^p : Who can doubt then of His inspecting Presence, it's being in the Assembly of Political Rulers ? He takes a particular and critical View of them, seeth who they are who compose the Congregation of the Mighty, and sit in this Honourable Assembly ; He calls them all by Name : His Eyes are like a Flame of Fire ; and penetrate into the Hearts of Rulers : *The Lord seeth not as Man seeth ; Man looketh at the outward Appearance, but the Lord looketh at the Heart* ^q. If any of the Members that compose this Society are govern'd by low, mean, base and selfish Principles in their Proceedings ; if they are influenced by a Party-Spirit, and have no Regard for the publick Good, any further than is consistent with their private Interests, the Omniscient GOD remarks it : Are there any careless, indolent Members, contented with the Honours and Emoluments of their advanced Seats, not

^m Jer. 23. 23. 24. ⁿ Prov. 15. 3. ^o Prov. 5. 21. ^p Heb 4. 13. ^q 1 Sam. 16. 7.

attending to the weighty Concerns of Government, the great GOD is privy to it : He is conscious of it, if there be any who indulge themselves in letting their Minds be absent from the Business of their exalted Stations, who depend upon their *Brethren* to think for them ; and by an *implicit Faith*, will give their *Votes* with the Majority, not weighing and examining Matters themselves, which they act upon : If *Iniquity* should be established by a Law, in this Assembly, the righteous LORD, who loveth Righteousness, has a perfect Knowledge of it.

If obvious Measures to promote the Honour of GOD, the Interests of Religion, and the Relief and Prosperity of his People be neglected, it comes under his Observation : He was able, from His own Knowledge, thus to expostulate with the Congregation of the Mighty of old, *How long will ye judge unjustly ?* And this was His Complaint, *They know not, neither will they understand, they walk in Darknes, all the Foundations of the Earth are out of Course.* In short, He is thoroughly acquainted with all the Sins of this Assembly, whether of Omission or Commission.

And indeed, this His Inspection is very awful ; for it is in order to a future Account, which He will exact of the Rulers of the Earth : *The Great, as well as Small, must stand before His enlightned Tribunal :* Though Rulers are called Gods, yet they must die like Men : *The Breath even of Princes goeth forth, and after Death is the Judgment* . The exalted Potentates of the Earth are accountable to Him, who is higher than the highest : And with GOD there will be no Respect of Persons : He will judge impartially ; and none of the Distinctions, which make a Difference between Men in this World, will be regarded at the last Day ; but every Man shall be treated according to his Works, whether he be high or low, rich or poor.

z *Psal.* 82. 2, to 5. s *Rev.* 20. 12. t *Psal.* 82. 6, 7. u *Psal.* 46. 4.
And

And if the Great GOD takes Cognizance of what is *amiss* in the Assembly of *Civil Rulers*, before He doth of what is *pleasing* to Him. He observes the Integrity, the Diligence and the Faithfulness of those who sit in the Assembly of the Mighty: He beholds their Patience and Self-denial, their publick Spirit, and the agreeable Application of their Talents; the good Improvement they make of their superior Accomplishments, and their peculiar Opportunities to do Good, and singular Advantages to serve the Honour of His Name in their exalted Stations, and to approve themselves publick Blessings: They may address Him in the Words of Governour *Nebemiah*, *Think upon me, my GOD, for good, according to all that I have done for this People* *. He keeps a Record of their Fidelity and Serviceableness; and will gloriously Reward them therefor in the World to come: They shall have Boldness in the Day of Judgment, and rejoice with Joy unspeakable; when Shame shall cover the Face, and Regret and Anguish fill the Soul of the unfaithful, unprofitable and mischievous Ruler.

2^{dly}, The great GOD is present in the Assembly of Political Rulers *influentially*.

He has a tender Regard for *human Societies*; and in order to their Safety, Peace and Prosperity, establishes and preserves *Government* in them: He furnishes them with Rulers: The raising up Persons of this Character is His Work, *The Powers that be, are ordained of Him* *. *The Shields of the Earth are His* *. By Him Kings reign, and Princes decree Justice: By Him Princes rule, and Nobles, yea, all the Judges of the Earth *. He vouchsafes His favourable Influences in the Assembly of Rulers; otherwise how could His kind Intention and Purpose in setting up and continuing a good Form of Government among a People be ever accomplished?

— w *Neb.* 5. 19. x *Rom.* 13. 1. y *Psal.* 47. 9. z *Prov.* * 15. 6.

(1.) The

(1.) The great GOD is present with *Political Rulers*, when they have sufficient *Light*, for their Direction in the important Work they are called unto.

Light proceeds from Him, He is the *Father* of it :^a He giveth Understanding, Wisdom and Prudence : He made King *David* wise as an *Angel*, to discern both Good and Evil ; gave his Son *Solomon* an understanding Heart, so that there was none like him, before nor after him ; and furnished *Daniel* with extensive Measures of Wisdom.

When He, who dwelleth between the *Cherubims*, *shines forth*, affords *Light*, gives Counsel and Direction in this Assembly, He is present in it by His Influences upon the Minds of His Servants. And is it not oftentimes so ? Don't He lead them in a right and plain Path ? He is the GOD of *the Spirits of all Flesh*^b ; and has an easy Access to the Souls, which He hath made ; strengthens Men's thinking Powers and Faculties ; scatters the Clouds which darken the Minds of Rulers, and irradiates their Understandings ; leads them into such wise and prudent Measures as answer the great Purposes of *Government* : Under the illuminating Influences of Heaven they make good Laws, do *Justice* to Persons who complain to them of Grievances ; project such *Schemes*, as greatly tend to the Peace, Safety and Prosperity of a People ; are directed to Means conducive to their *Defence*, from the Insults and Depredations of their Enemies ; and which issue in the *Annoyance* of those that rise up against them : We have had a late Instance of a great and good Projection of this Kind, form'd by the *Government* we are immediately under.

(2.) The great GOD is present in the Assembly of *Political Rulers* by His *animating Influences*.

^a James 1. 17. ^b Numb. 16. 22.

Courage is an Endowment necessary in the Leaders of a People. Rulers should not be Cowards. When the Lord advanced *Joshua* to be Successor to His Servant *Moses*, He bid him *be strong, and of good Courage*. Unhappy is it for a People when they have Women and Children to govern them; those who are not only void of Political Wisdom, but Persons who are apt to be disheartened at the Sight of Difficulties, and affrighted at the Appearance of Dangers: But happy is it when GOD provides strong Rods for the Scepter of them that bear Rule over a People. Civil Rulers should be steady and unmoveable, as the great Mountains, in just and good Proceedings, steadfast in the Discharge of the Duties of their superior Places, and ought with Intrepidity to pursue what makes for the Welfare of the Publick, though they incur the ill Resentments of particular Men, and expose themselves to the Malignity of some People. Now when they are resolute and courageous in the Discharge of their weighty *Trustments*, it proceeds from the divine animating Influences: Being vigorously moved hereby, they had rather offend Men than the great and mighty Ruler of the Universe, whose *Trustees* they are; had rather preserve a good Conscience, than gratify ill Humours, and keep in good Terms with those who impertinently meddle with State-Affairs, and addict themselves to inspect the publick Administration, and find Fault with every Thing almost, which they themselves have not a Hand in. Being thus influenced by Heaven, the Pilots of a Province won't baulk their Duty, thro' a base Fear of being dropt out of their publick Character at the next Election: They had rather live neglected, and in an obscure private Capacity, than omit doing what appears to them to be for the publick Weal, or have a Hand in what they think will be an *Encroachment* upon the *Royal Prerogative*, or Detrimental to the People, with whose Interests they are entrusted.

Joshua is a *Trustee* of the People: The Contrary is a *Trustee* of the People.

C

As

As the *Prudence* which they have received from above will restrain them from lavishing away the Publick Money, so they won't let a Projection drop, if they can help it, when the common Safety and Prosperity makes the Prosecution of it necessary. They will engage in chargeable Enterprizes, in Behalf of their People, trusting in GOD to give them an Ability in Time, to discharge the Expences arising therefrom. The Outcries of inconsiderate People will not terrify them, so much as to prove a Temptation to Unfaithfulness.

The great GOD is present in the Assembly of Political Rulers by His *pacifick* Influences.

When there is Peace among the Heads of a People it proceeds from Him: He is the GOD of Peace. He maketh Peace in the *high Places* of the Earth, and preserves it among Rulers: By an *Impression* upon the Souls of Men, He creates and upholds a *Harmony* among them. When Love and a good Agreement subsists among Rulers, in their Essays to promote the common Welfare, it is evident, GOD is with them in a gracious Manner. How favourable is He to them, and to those who are under their Authority, when one Spirit and Soul appears to animate this Body of Men; and they are united in employing their *Talents* for the Honour of Him, from whom they have derived them, and the Good of the People, who are their Care and Charge? But on the other Hand, when there are Jars and a Misunderstanding among Rulers, GOD absents Himself from them, as to His *gracious* Presence; and it bodes ill to this Assembly, and has a dark Aspect upon the Circumstances of a People. Where there is Envy and Strife among Persons of *low Life*, there is Confusion; but much worse is a *Fire* kindled and blown up in the Bowels of a *Political Body*: 'Tis a bad Omen, when this is the State of the *Congregation of the Mighty*: It presages ill to Rulers and Ruled: The Contrary is a Token for Good, that

that GOD has a gracious Design and Purpose with respect to those who are in Authority, and them who are subject to them. A good Harmony is the Strength, the Beauty and Glory of Societies; and especially of *political Assemblies*. A House divided against itself is a Place of *Confusion*, and in Danger of falling; and 'tis well if a *Kingdom* divided against itself is not brought to Ruin.

(4.) When Rulers are *patient* and *resigned*, the great GOD is *influentially present* with them.

They have need of Patience and Resignation: The Occasions for the Exercise of these *Vertues* are many and various. The *Labours and Fatigues* of Government are very heavy, if it be faithfully attended: Sometimes the *Schemes and Projections*, which they form to promote the Publick Good, don't succeed according to their Hope and Expectation; the Smiles of Divine Providence don't accompany them, although they are most wisely adapted to bring about the End they are design'd for: This Disappointment calls for their Patience and Resignation to the Will of GOD. Sometimes their *Way* is so dark, encumbered and embarrassed that they can't proceed with *Satisfaction* of Mind: And let them be never so diligent and faithful in serving the Publick, many will fault and reproach them: This is too often the Case. *Moses* was a Ruler of rare Accomplishments, he was a wise Man, and learned in all the *Learning of the Egyptians*, and was eminently faithful in his Post; yet were there some that disliked him, and were uneasy under his *Conduct*; their discontented Spirits moved them to an Insurrection against this excellent Servant of the Lord; there was a Confederacy to throw off his Government: The great Cry was, that *he took too much upon him*; but GOD awfully rebuked these bold and wicked Men. When Civil Rulers are patient and resign'd under the uneasy and difficult

a Matth. 12. 25. c Numb 16.

Things they meet with, from a Consciousness of the *Divine over-ruling Providence*, and their own *Integrity*, the great GOD is graciously present with them by His Influences upon their Spirits. He is the GOD of *Patience*. They are the Words of the Apostle, *Strengthened with all Might, according to His glorious Power unto all Patience and Longsuffering, with Joyfulness.*

I have considered, that the *inspecting and influential Presence* of the great GOD is in the Assembly of Political Rulers : I would observe,

3^{dy}, That His *safe-guarding Presence* is in this Assembly.

The *Congregation of the Mighty* is sometimes exposed to great Dangers. There are secret Plots and Devices, form'd against it by the Enemies of the *Government*, the Execution of which would be fatal and destructive to it. When GOD, who is knowing to all the Works of Darkness, and has the wicked Contrivances of Men and Devils under His Observation, brings to Light *treasonable Machinations* against Government, He is graciously present with the Assembly of the Mighty : Thus was He present with the great Convention of our Nations, in the Reign of King JAMES the First ; He wonderfully discovered the *Gunpowder Treason*, when it was ripe for Execution : In the Mount was GOD seen ; the sudden Design was in an astonishing Manner detected, and the wicked Instruments of it were brought to condign Punishment.

Sometimes the Enemies of a Government seek its Ruin by *open Violence*, by hellish *Insurrections* and *Rebellions* : But the Supreme Ruler of the World, who sitteth in the *Heavens*, laugheth at their Attempts, maketh them as *Chaff before the Wind* ; and His Angel chaseth them.

This was the Case in our Nations, *A. D. 1175*. And we have had a late Instance of it: GOD's People have seen the *Rebels* in Scotland fleeing before the *Mighty* and *Puissant* DUKE of CUMBERLAND: Their Hands have not been able to perform their Enterprize. Blessed be the most high GOD, who granteth *Deliverance*, and giveth *Salvation unto Kings*, that the horrid *Rebellion*, conceived and formed in the *Conclave* of Hell and Rome, fostered and spirited up by the Courts of *France* and *Spain*, hath been so far obstructed in its *Progress*: May it be utterly discouraged, and all the Sparks of it extinguished. It remains now that I make some *Application* of what has been said.

APPLICATION.

Is it most fit and suitable, that a *Number* should be concerned in the Civil Government of a People? what Cause have We to bless GOD, for the agreeable Political *Establishment* which we are under.

The *supream* Government at Home, which we are the Subjects of, calls for our most hearty Gratitude to Heaven. That Form of Government is thought by many wise Men to be the Best, which is lodged in the Hands of a KING and *Parliament*; the best adapted for the Security and Advantage of a People: Should we not be very thankful for so good a *Constitution*? It has been once and again struck at, and the Subversion of it has been greatly attempted, the Liberties and Privileges of the *British* Realm have been in great Hazard, but the *Gates of Hell*, and Men of arbitrary Principles, have not been able to prevail against them: Being safe guarded by the kind and watchful Providence of GOD, they have continued unto this Day. And

And what Reason have we to bless the great Ruler of the World, for the *Charter-Privileges* which we enjoy? That the Form of Government we are immediately under, is not oppressive. We are ruled by a GOVERNOUR who represents the KING, a Board of Councillors, chosen by and from among our-selves; and by a House of Representatives, elected by the Freeholders of the respective Towns of the Province. It is of GOD, that our political Circumstances are so comfortable; We should rejoice in them, and give Him Praise, that it is our Lot to be subject to such a desirable Constitution: May we never be so imprudent and ungrateful to GOD and the KING, as to take any Steps, which may expose us to the Loss of our *Charter*; but let us be solicitous that we may enjoy it all our Days, and leave it as a most rich and valuable Inheritance to our Children.

2^{dly}, Is the inspecting Presence of the great GOD in the Assembly of political Rulers, then they ought to be greatly influenced by the Consideration hereof in all their Proceedings.

They should act up to Conscience, as remembering they are under His Eye, who is a Being of consummate Righteousness and Goodness. These divine Perfections, which He displays in the Government of the World, they should be concern'd to Copy. They should be Followers of Him, in the Exercise of the same Virtues and Perfections; hereby their Administrations will be highly pleasing to Him. But if they are conducted by Principles that are corrupt and vicious, He will behold it with Displeasure. The Presence of such a GOD, the Virtues which He discovers in the Government of His Creatures, should keep the Gods of the Earth under a proper Regimen. Shall not these Excellencies make them afraid? Shall not the Dread of a just and good GOD fall upon and influence them in all their Transactions? Shall it not engage them to the greatest Fidelity in the Services

Services He requires of them? Shall not the Intention for which He takes Notice of their Actions, have a mighty Force to make them sincere and conscientious? Doth He *inspect* them, in order to the calling them to an Account, and rendering to them according to their Behaviour in the publick Capacity they sustain; and should not the Thought hereof oblige them to acquit themselves well in their exalted Stations, that they may escape His tremendous Rebuke, and through Grace, receive His transporting *Well done, good and faithful Servant*? Faithful Rulers shall receive a great and blessed Reward from Him, who knows their Services, and is acquainted with the Integrity of their Hearts; And when we lament the Loss we sustain by the Deaths of our wise, faithful and serviceable *Patriots*, may we not rejoice in their superior and peculiar Felicity; and particularly should we not refresh our Souls, in the midst of our Sorrow, by thinking of the distinguishing Glory, which is already, and will at the *last Day* be assigned, by the Grace of our Lord JESUS CHRIST, to the lately deceas'd Honourable *Thomas Cushing*, Esq; who uprightly employed his *rare and sanctified Political Talents* for the Honour of the great GOD, and in the Service of His People?

And will the Honourable *Gentlemen*, who are to be concern'd in the important *Elections* of this Day, suffer me to say, Let the Consideration of GOD's *inspecting Presence* make a powerful Impression upon your Hearts, and govern you in the great Affair before you. Let me entreat your *Honours*, to consider yourselves in the Sight of GOD, and accountable unto Him: He will cite us all before His Bar in a little Time, and treat us according to our Demeanour in the respective Relations and Stations we are now in: Let a Sense of this guide you in your *Elections*, and make you studious of electing those into His Majesty's Council who are most likely to be serviceable, and who come nearest to the Scripture-Character

of

of those who are meet to be introduced into high Places of Trust, Power and Authority.

And need I be your *Monitor*, that they should be Men of *Knowledge and Wisdom*? Did not the *Head* of the Tribes of *Israel* direct to Persons thus qualified? *Take ye wise Men*, says he, *understanding and known among your Tribes, and I will make them Rulers over you*. A Councillor should be a good *Thinker*: Not that it be necessary he should be a great *Philosopher*; but he should understand his Duty as a *Magistrate*, in such an elevated Station, be well acquainted with the State of his *Country*, and be *understanding in the Times*. So necessary was *Wisdom* thought to be in a *Ruler* by the *Egyptians*, that their *Kings* had their *Crowns and Diadems* twisted with *Serpents*, as an *Emblem* of this excellent Endowment.

And doth not *Justice and Honesty* enter into the Character of a good *Ruler*? Every one, I hope, will acknowledge these *Virtues* should be found in all those that sit at the *Council-Board*; *He that ruleth over Men, must be Just*. *Machiavel* would have a *Ruler* be a cunning Deceiver; but such a vicious Man is not to be trusted with private Concerns, much less with the Affairs and Interests of the *Publick*. A *Ruler* should deserve the Commendation that was given to a *Heathen Emperor*, that he was *Wise without Improbability*.

And ought they not to be Men of a *publick generous Spirit*? *Moses* was advised to appoint Men *bating Covetousness*, for *Rulers*. The *Emperor Adrian's* Motto was, *Non mihi, sed Populo*, I am not for myself, but for my People. *Mordecai* was a bright Example of this Spirit.

h Deut. 1. 13. i 2 Sam. 23. 3, k Exod. 18. 21. l Esth. 10. 3.

Again

Again, would not he who is chosen to sit at the Council-Board, be wanting in his Character, should he be destitute of Zeal, Courage and Magnanimity? *Jethro* advised *Moses* to chuse able Men, and set them over the People: According to the *Hebrew* it is Men of Strength or Courage. The Steps of *Salomon's Throne* were on both Sides supported with Lions: They were design'd, no doubt, to be Symbols of that Courage which should be in a Ruler. A King, that sitteth in the Throne of Judgment, scattereth away all Evil with his Eyes, says the wise Man.^m

And is not Mercy, as well as Zeal and Justice, essential to a good Ruler? In Government Mercy must be mixt and blended with Justice. We read the Throne is established by Righteousnessⁿ. We also read, it is established by Mercy.^o *Summum Jus, summa injuria*, is a true Maxim. Mercy makes a Ruler's Face to shine. I remember, the Roman Orator in an Oration which he made to *Julius Caesar*, in Behalf of one who had been on *Pompey's* Side, says, That Men resemble the Gods in nothing more than in Goodness and Mercy. It was the Advice of *Mæcenas* to the Emperor *Augustus*, that he would not abuse his Power, nor think it any Diminution of it, if he did not do all that he could do.

Finally, Is it not of great Importance that those who are chosen into His Majesty's Council, be Gentlemen of Sobriety and Religion? Are those so fit to govern others who don't govern their Passions and Appetites? Rulers should be able to rule their own Spirits, to restrain their criminal Inclinations. It was a poor Character given of an *Assyrian* Monarch, That he was the best Man alive at Eating and Drinking. Is an Epicure or a Debauchee a meet Person to be a Senator? And is it not to be wished, that all who sit at this Honourable Board might

^m Prov. 20. 8. ⁿ Prov. 15. 12. ^o Prov. 25. 5.

be of a *Religious Character*? The stronger the Ties of Conscience are, the better qualified are Persons (*cæteris paribus*) for a publick Trust, King *David* thought so, he could not bear with irreligious Courtiers.

3^{dy}, Are the Divine gracious *Influences* so necessary in the Assembly of Political Rulers, we see where their *Dependance* should be placed.

A great *Trust* is reposed them, they need Help from above, for the right and acceptable Discharge of it: Being sensible hereof, it is of Consequence that they exercise Faith in the allsufficient GOD, through the great *Mediator*. GOD is able to guide the *Guides* of a People, to lead their *Leaders*, and give their *Senators* Wisdom; to animate and inspire them with *Resolution* and *Courage*; to fill their Souls with *Patience* and *pacifick Dispositions*; and carry them through the weighty Affairs they are engaged in. And have they any Reason to suspect His *Inclination* to afford them His gracious influential Presence? If they make Him the Object of their *Trust*, with a sincere Regard to His Glory, and are found in a *Way of Well-doing*.

4^{thly}, What we have heard, suggests to us the great *Duty of Gratitude* to a gracious GOD, when Things go well in the *Assembly* of our Rulers.

When it is so, GOD is with them of a *Truth*, by His favourable Influences; and we should observe and gratefully acknowledge it, to His Praise and Glory.

And hath He not appeared to smile upon the *Administrations* of Government in this *Province*, from Time to Time? Have we not had good *Laws* enacted by our Political *Fathers*? Laws well calculated to prevent Irreligion; and for the promoting of Virtue and Piety; to deter Persons from profaning the *Sabbath*; from needlessly absenting themselves from the *publick Worship*;

and to guard the adorable Name of GOD, from the Abuses of the *Tongues*; and to defend our *Persons, Names and Interests*; to curb Men's licentious *Passions and Appetites*; to maintain our *Peace*, and advance our *Prosperity*? Have not Means been used to protect us from an *Invasion* of our *Enemies* by Sea; and have not our exposed inland *Frontiers* been the Care of our *Honourable Rulers*? And have they not carried on the Business of the Publick with a great Measure of *Peace and good Agreement*?

And here I cannot pass by in *Silence*, the late ever-memorable successful *Expedition*, first plan'd, concerted and resolved upon in the *General Assembly* of this *Province*: An Enterprize of the greatest Consequence, in its prosperous Event to our *Merchandize and Fishery*! A Design succeeded by such a Series of astonishing *Providences*, that we need not doubt, that He who hath the Hearts of all Men at His Disposal, influenced our *Honourable Rulers* to form and prosecute this wonderful Scheme.

When the News was first brought us of the very remarkable Success, that attended that great *Affair*, every *Mouth was filled with Laughter, and Tongue with Singing*: Then said we, *The Lord hath done great Things for us, The Lord hath done great Things for us, whereof we are glad*. Our Obligations to be thankful to the GOD of *Armies and Victory*, still remain as strong as ever: Though alas! We are called to mourn the Deaths of many Hundreds of our *brave Men*, cut down in the *surrendered City*, by the Sword of the destroying *Angel*! What shall we say? The Ways of Divine Providence are *unsearchable*! But GOD is always infinitely Wise, Just and Holy, when Clouds and Darkness are round about His Throne. The awful *Scene* of Death, which has been in that *Place*, should not make us unthankful for the Conquest of it.

Will your EXCELLENCY now permit me humbly and thankfully to take Notice of the observable gracious Presence of *Heaven*, that has been with you since your Access to the *Chief Seat* of Government among us : Through the good Hand of GOD upon you, your Administrations have (as we trust) been easy to your *own Mind* ; before they have been *Satisfactory* to your *People*.

And here let me congratulate your EXCELLENCY, upon the Reduction of *Cape-Breton*, to the Obedience of the *British Crown* ; a great Event, which your Heart was much set upon ; and in the Accomplishment of which you have (under Divine Providence) been the principal Leader.

We have Reason also to bless the *Heart-disposing* GOD, that, when your Presence was so needful at *Louisbourg*, your Self-denial was so great, as to reconcile you to a *Voyage* to that Place ; where your Essays to regulate Matters were, in a good Measure, succeeded ; and, that you were contented to make so *long a Stay* there, in a Time of raging Sickness : And we would gratefully acknowledge the Goodness of the great Preserver of Men, in returning you to your Government in Safety.

As your EXCELLENCY has been favour'd with GOD's gracious Influences hitherto, so may that GOD, who has been with you, be so for the future, and render you a great and lasting *Blessing* to us ; enable you successfully to use your Interest at *Home*, as well as your best Endeavours here, for the Good of *this People* ; and, in due Time, gloriously Reward you for your faithful Services.

5^{thly}, Is the great GOD willing to be *influentially* present in the Assembly of *Political Rulers*, this should be a great *Motive to Prayer*.

It

It should be so with those who have a Seat in this superiour Convention. Rulers should be moved by this Consideration, often to repair to the Prayer-hearing GOD, who is both able and willing to supply all their Needs, according to his Riches in Glory thro' JESUS CHRIST. We read of Rulers in Scripture, how were Men of Prayer, David was so, Solomon prayed for Wisdom, that he might know how to go out and come in before the great People, whom he had the Charge of. Nehemiab, Governour of Judah, was a Man of Prayer, so was Moses, Samuel and Jehoshaphat: But not to insist upon this, I hope our Honourable Rulers, have such a Sense of their Dependance upon GOD, as not to need any Excitations to Prayer from me.

I would apply myself to you, my Brethren, who are not of the Legislature, I would do it to all the People of GOD in the Province, were they within hearing, and beseech you and them to be excited, by what has been said, to pray for your Rulers. GOD is willing to afford them His Help, to afford them His gracious Presence, and what an Encouragement is this to their People to pray for them. Is not their Work attended with Difficulties, and especially in this tempestuous & dark Time of War? Don't our Prosperity depend very much upon the Divine favourable Presence with them? Are they not betruſted with our invaluable Interests, and shall we not seek the Prosperity of this important Assembly by our Prayers? Is it not agreeable to the Apostolick Direction, to pray for our Rulers? *I exhort, says St. Paul, that first of all Supplications, Prayers, giving of Thanks be made for all Men; for Kings, and for all that are in Authority, that we may lead a quiet and peaceable Life, in all Godliness and Honesty.* But let us not confine our Prayers to the Government we are more immediately under, but let us offer up our Supplications for our rightful, lawful and gracious King

GEORGE, His Council, the Ministers of State, and both Houses of Parliament, That the great GOD would be in these Assemblies of the Mighty, graciously influencing of them; affording Protection from the secret Attempts, and open Violence of all the Adversaries of our happy Establishment.

And that our Prayers in Behalf of our Rulers may be effectual, we must be concern'd that we be obedient to the Holy GOD: Will He attend to our Supplications, if we do not cleanse our Hands, and purify our Hearts? If we turn away our Ear from hearing the Law, Will our Prayers be heard, though they be many? GOD may be provoked by the Sins of a People, to fill the Way of their Rulers with Darkness; and though they abound in Prayer for them, they shall not be heard. When He was angry with His ancient People, for their Iniquities, He denounced this Commination against them, that He would do a marvellous Work amongst them, a marvellous Work, and a Wonder, the Wisdom of their wise Men should perish, and the Understanding of their prudent Men should be hid: On the contrary, having promised His People to pour out His Spirit upon them, He gives them Assurance of His Favour with Regard to their Political Government, "I will turn my Hand upon thee, and purely purge away thy Dross, and take away all thy Tin; and I will restore thy Judges as at the First, and thy Counsellors as at the Beginning: Afterward thou shalt be called, the City of Righteousness, the faithful City."

9 JU 64

Psalm 28. 9. 1. Isaiah 29. 14. u. Isaiah 1. 25, 26.

F I N I S.

